THE BRIDGE

JUNJI ITO

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IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO IT IS. JUST COME AND ACCOMPANY ME!
GRANDMA WHO LIVES ALONE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE CALLED ME SHE SOUNDED LIKE SHE'S AFRAID OF SOMETHING
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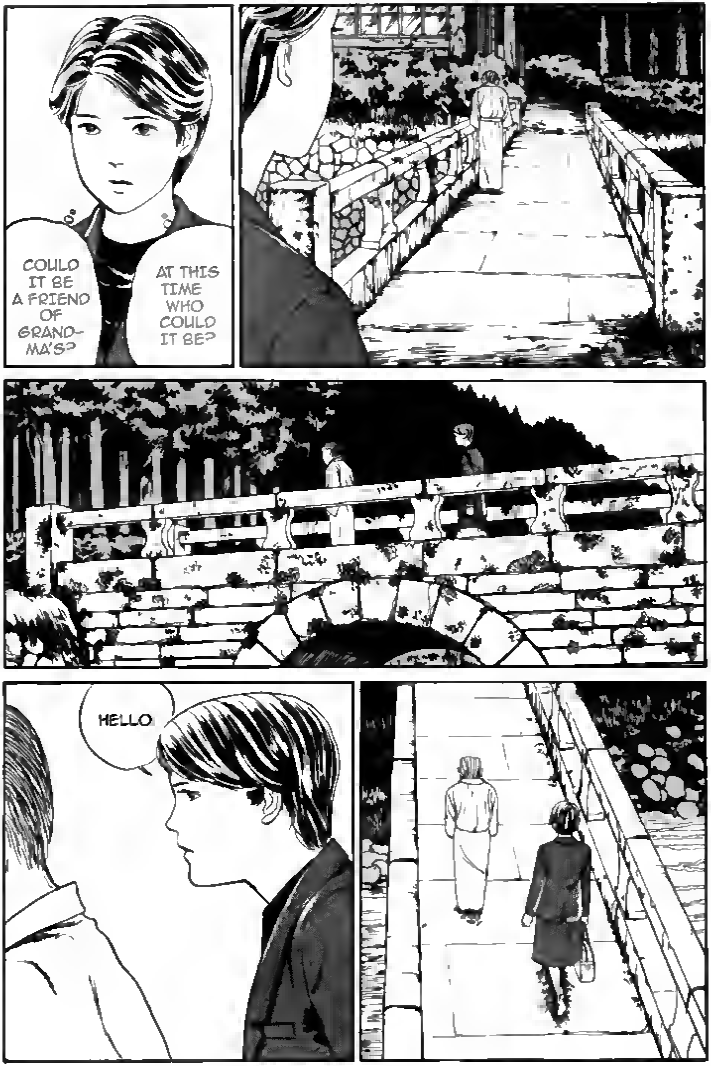
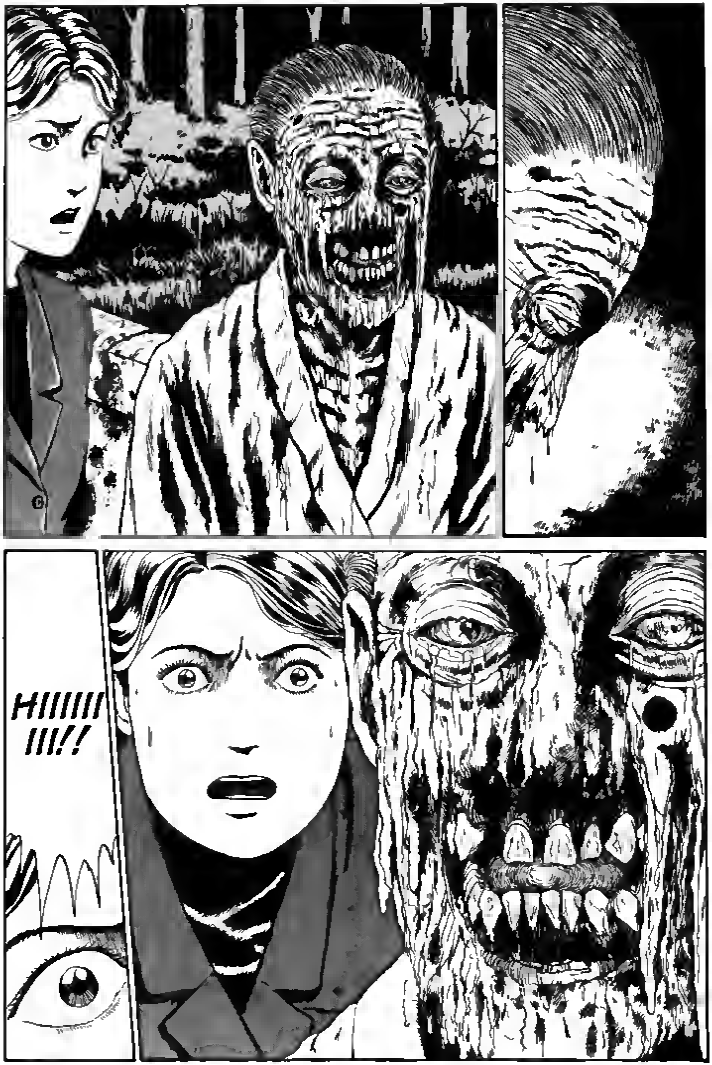
THIS PLACE IS ALWAYS SO DESERTED


COULD IT BE A FRIEND OF GRANDMA'S?
AT THIS TIME WHO COULD IT BE?
HELLO

AH...
EXCUSE ME, ARE YOU MY GRANDMA'S FRIEND?
UM...
EVER SINCE MY GRANDPA PASSED AWAY LAST YEAR, MY GRANDMA HAS BEEN LIVING ALONE IN THIS PLACE, MAKING US SO WORRIED.
PLEASE COME BY AND VISIT HER OFTEN!
JUST AS I THOUGHT! OTHER THAN THE HOUSE THAT MY GRANDMA LIVES IN, THERE IS NO ONE ELSE LIVING AROUND THIS AREA.
ARE YOU HERE TO VISIT MY GRANDMA?
IT'S COLD STANDING OUT HERE, PLEASE HAVE A SEAT INSIDE!
ERM... PLEASE HAVE A SEAT IN THE HOUSE.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GRANDMA!
IT'S ME, KANAKO! GRANDMA!
GRANDMA, OPEN THE DOOR!
QUICK!
KANAKO, YOU'RE HERE I'M OPENING THE DOOR NOW
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WHO'S... THAT?!
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GRANDMA!
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HE'LL APPEAR EVERY NIGHT, ON THAT BRIDGE...
HE'S MY UNCLE... HE PASSED AWAY A LONG TIME AGO, WHEN I WAS STILL A CHILD...
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THAT PERSON... HE'S KINGORO...
THEY ARE ALWAYS WAITING FOR THE TIME WHEN I'M ALONE...
EVER SINCE YOUR GRANDPA PASSED AWAY, LEAVING ME ALL ALONE IN THIS HOUSE, THOSE THINGS HAVE BEEN APPEARING...
SO THAT'S A GHOST?!
OSOBE ——— !

MANY PEOPLE HAVE DIED IN THIS VILLAGE IN THE PAST
BUT... THERE ARE SO MANY VOICES!
THE GHOSTS ARE CALLING OUT TO ME
OSODE...
OSODE... OSODE...
AND THEY DID NOT REST IN PEACE
OSODE...
THEY WANT TO DRAG ME DOWN THE RIVER. LOOK, THEY ARE ALL WAVING AT ME
THAT'S BECAUSE
WHY ARE THEY CALLING OUT TO YOU GRANDMA?

osobe...
osobe...
osobe...
osobe...
THERE ARE SO MANY OF THEM
GRAND -MA

THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'M TELLING YOU ABOUT THIS...
KANAKO... YOU MUST BE UNABLE TO SLEEP AS WELL...
SO GRANDMA WILL TELL YOU ABOUT THINGS WHEN I WAS A KID.
SEAT AND LISTEN WELL...
SERIOUSLY I CAN'T SLEEP WITH THEM CALLING OUT TO ME THE ENTIRE NIGHT
DURING THOSE TIMES, THIS VILLAGE HAS A REALLY WEIRD CUSTOM...
AND THAT WEIRD CUSTOM WAS THE WAY FUNERAL CEREMONIES WERE CONDUCTED
I GREW UP IN THIS HOUSE, AND HAVE ALWAYS BEEN LIVING HERE...
ALTHOUGH THE PEOPLE HERE PASSED AWAY ONE BY ONE, THIS VILLAGE USED TO BE VERY LIVELY!

TO SEND OFF THE DEAD, EVERYONE IN THE VILLAGE WOULD GATHER AT THE SIDES OF THE RIVER
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MY MOTHER AND I WERE LOOKING FROM THE BRIDGE.
THE OLDEST FUNERAL I COULD REMEMBER IS KINGORO'S ONE.
OSODE UNCLE'S COMING. REMEMBER TO TAKE A GOOD LOOK.
HEY! KINGORO IS COMING!

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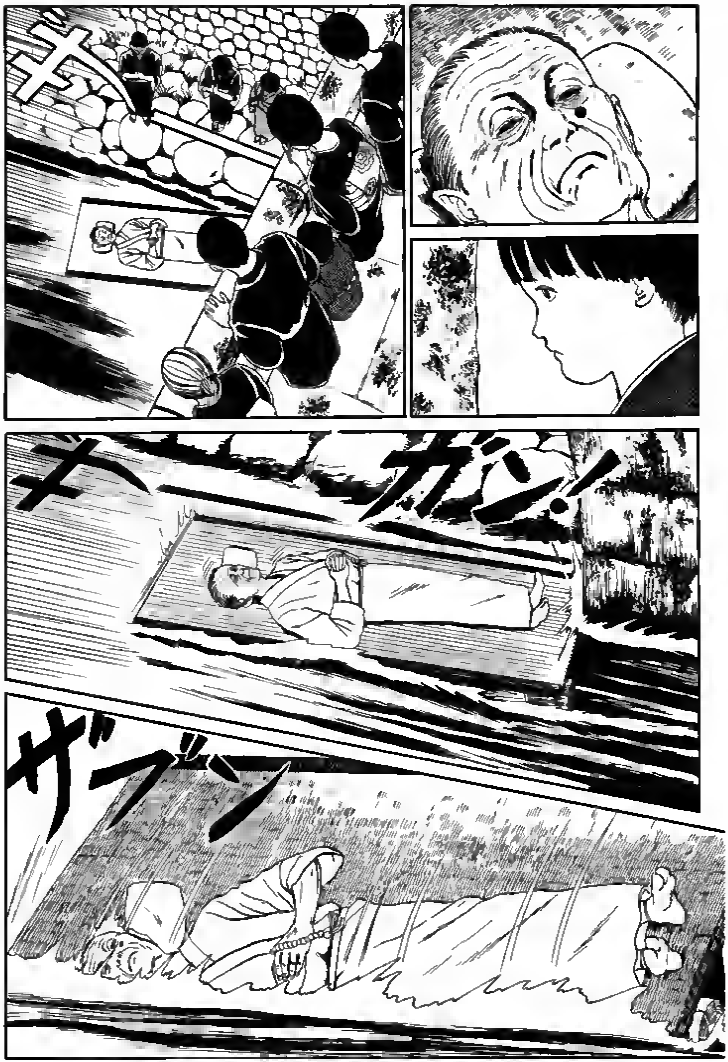
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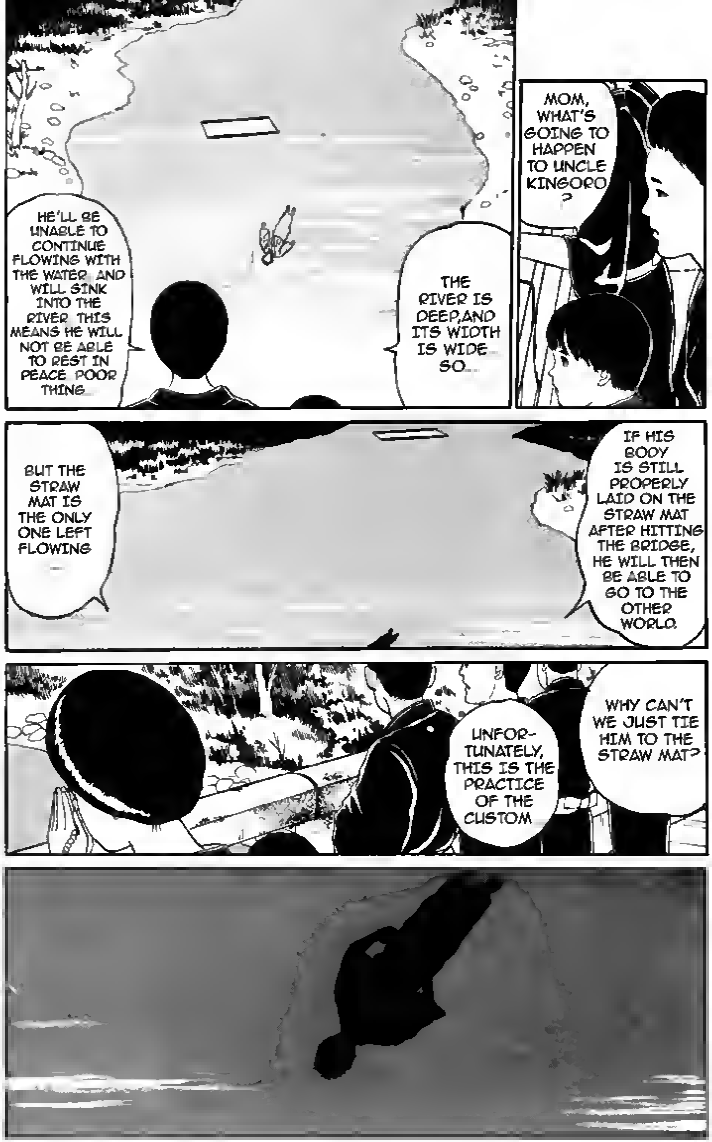
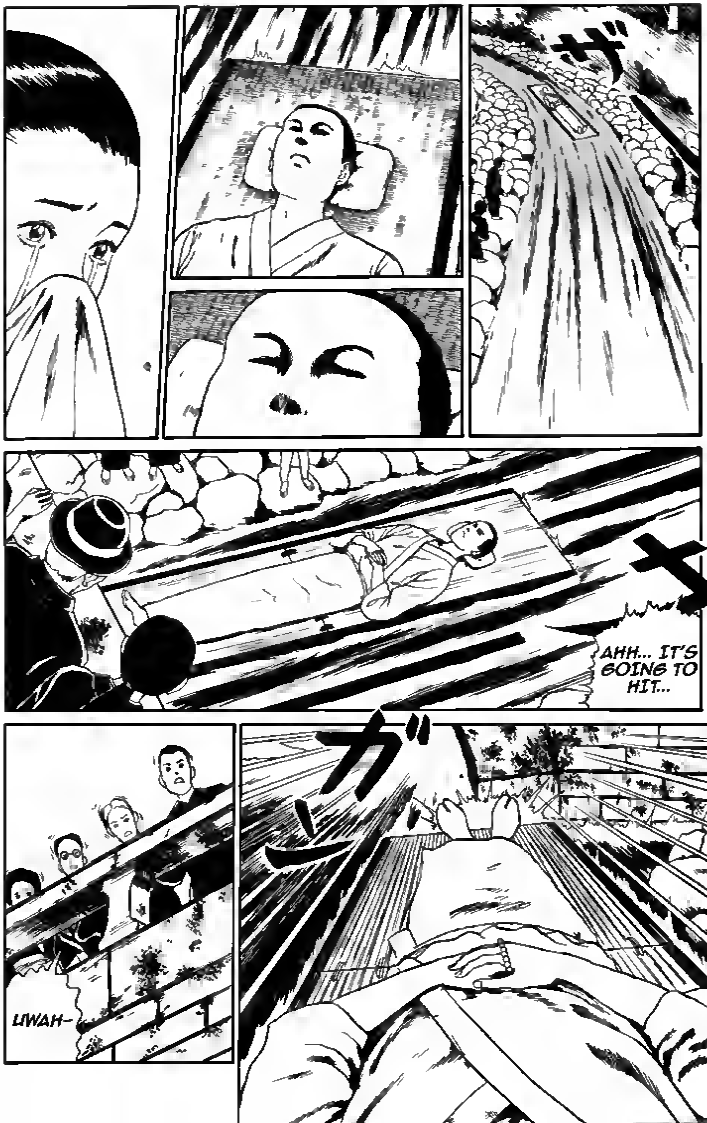
AH, IT HIT THE BRIDGE KINGORO HAS REALLY BAD LUCK
UNCLE HAS DROPPED INTO THE RIVER!
AH... POOR THING...


MOM, WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO UNCLE KINGORO ?
THE RIVER IS DEEP,AND ITS WIDTH IS WIDE SO...
HE'LL BE UNABLE TO CONTINUE FLOWING WITH THE WATER, AND WILL SINK INTO THE RIVER. THIS MEANS HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO REST IN PEACE. POOR THING...
IF HIS BODY IS STILL PROPERLY LAID ON THE STRAW MAT AFTER HITTING THE BRIDGE, HE WILL THEN BE ABLE TO GO TO THE OTHER WORLD.
BUT THE STRAW MAT IS THE ONLY ONE LEFT FLOWING...
WHY CAN'T WE JUST TIE HIM TO THE STRAW MAT?
UNFOR-TUNATELY, THIS IS THE PRACTICE OF THE CUSTOM

SHOU-KICHI, HE...
SHOU-KICHI?
HE WAS A YOUNG MAN FROM THE VILLAGE IN THE PAST, AND HE DIED AT THE AGE OF 20.
SHOUKICHI WAS THE LAST ONE TO HAVE SUCH A FUNERAL OF HAVING THE DEAD BODIES FLOW WITH THE RIVER! I WAS ONLY 15 YEARS OLD THEN.
SHOUKICHI WAS THE TALLEST MAN IN OUR VILLAGE, WITH A HEIGHT OF ALMOST EIGHT FEET. HE MAY HAVE HAD A BIG BUILD, BUT HIS HEART WAS KIND AND AS SOFT AS COTTON
HE WAS MY FIRST LOVE... HAHAHA... AND MY FIANCE AS WELL.
BUT HE WAS CRUSHED TO DEATH BY A FALLEN TREE IN THE MOUNTAINS
HE NEEDED TWO STRAW MATS DURING HIS FUNERAL CEREMONY
AND... THERE YOU GO-
I WAS CRYING BADLY AND WAS NOT IN THE MOOD TO LOOK, BUT THE VILLAGERS SAID, "THIS IS SOMETHING REALLY WORTH LOOKING AT!"
LOOK, OSODE IS CRYING
THAT'S, OF COURSE.
IT'S FLOWING HERE NOW!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AHH... IT'S GOING TO HIT...
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UWAH-

LOOK... BECAUSE SHOUKICHI'S BODY IS TOO BIG...
AND HIS BODY HAS ALREADY SOLIDIFIED HE'S NOW STUCK!
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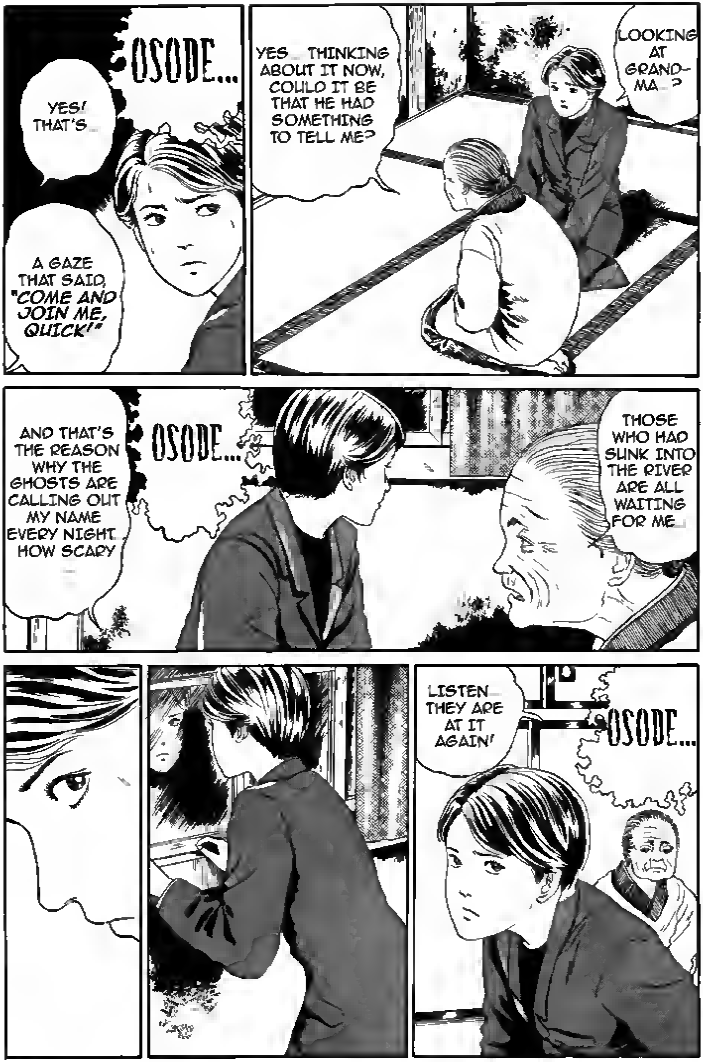
HEY YOUNG LAD! THINK OF A METHOD TO LET HIM PASS!
OTHER-WISE, IT WILL BE TOO PITIFUL FOR SHOU-KICHI!

CAN YOU REACH HIM?
NO PROB-LEM!
I WAS CERTAIN THAT SHOUKICHI HAD OPENED HIS EYES, AND IT SEEMED LIKE HE WAS LOOKING AT ME...
IT'S REALLY UNFORTUNATE FOR SHOUKICHI


OSODE...
YES! THAT'S...
A GAZE THAT SAID, "COME AND JOIN ME, QUICK!"
YES... THINKING ABOUT IT NOW, COULD IT BE THAT HE HAD SOMETHING TO TELL ME?
LOOKING AT GRANDMA...?
AND THAT'S THE REASON WHY THE GHOSTS ARE CALLING OUT MY NAME EVERY NIGHT. HOW SCARY...
OSODE...
THOSE WHO HAD SUNK INTO THE RIVER ARE ALL WAITING FOR ME...
LISTEN... THEY ARE AT IT AGAIN!
OSODE...

OSODE...
OSODE...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT GRANDMA?!
IT'S ALL BECAUSE YOU ARE STAYING HERE ALONE WE WILL LEAVE THIS PLACE TOGETHER!
I DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME LEFT...
KANAKO, IT MUST BE BECAUSE I'M DYING SOON...
AND MY BODY WILL SINK INTO THAT DEEP RIVER...
DON'T LEAVE ME TO FLOW FREELY IN THE RIVER, NO MATTER WHAT.
KANAKO YOU HAVE TO BE BURY ME IN THE GROUND AFTER I DIE...
I DON'T WANT TO SINK INTO THAT RIVER
GRANDMA... BE STRONG!...!!
IT'S TOO LATE... I'M GOING TO DIE...

GRANDMA!
WHAT'S WRONG?! HEY!
I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU
KANAKO
AH!
GRANDMA!
GRANDMA!
HEY!
AH!
GRANDMA!
IT'S A DREAM
SO

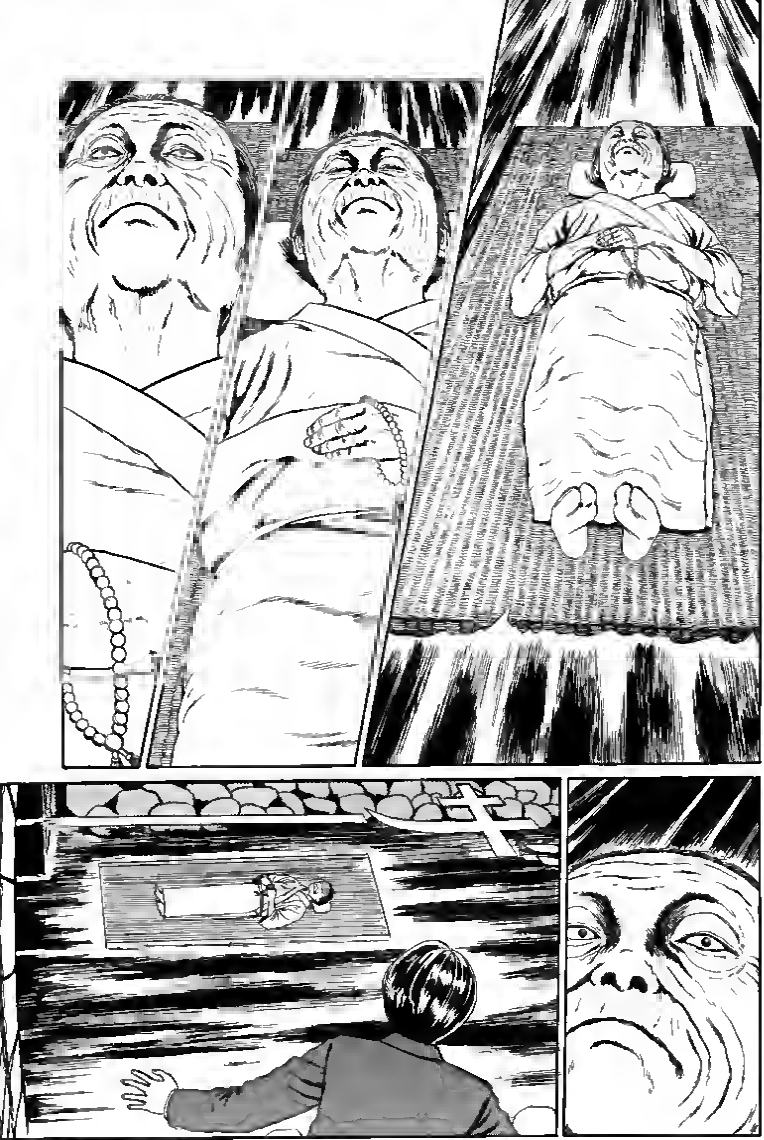
ブルルル
IT'S ALREADY FOUR I HAVE TO HURRY, OR ELSE IT'LL GET DARK BEFORE I REACH GRANDMA'S HOUSE
I TOOK A SHORT NAP
THIS PLACE IS... OH YES... I GOT SLEEPY WHILE ON THE WAY TO GRANDMA'S HOUSE, AND SO
WHAT A WEIRD DREAM

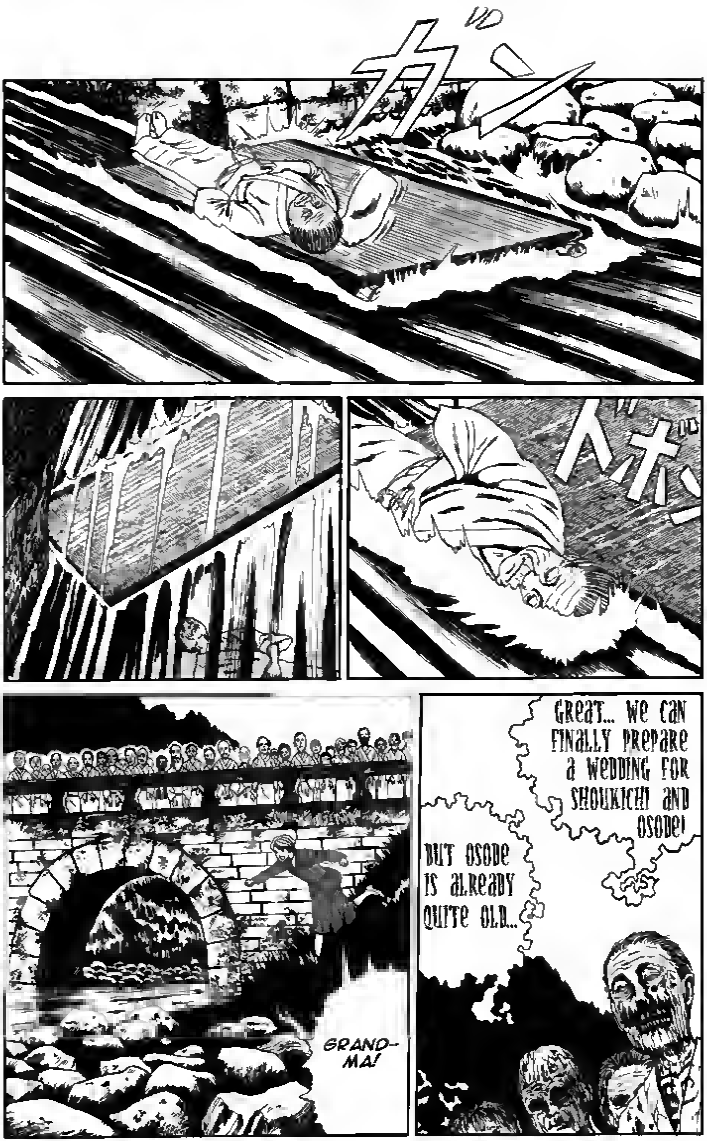
THIS SUCKS. IT IS EXACTLY LIKE THE DREAM.
NO WAY

HELLO
... PASSED AWAY JUST A WHILE AGO...
OSODE, SHE...
WHAT... WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ...?!
WHO WHO WAS THAT PERSON?

SEEMS LIKE SHE WAS SLEEPING HERE BEFORE...
Ooo
GRANDMA?!
WHERE ARE YOU GRANDMA?!
AH!
JUST WHERE...
IS GRAND-MA...
STRAW MATS...
AH!

OSODE IS COMING...
HEY-
OSODE...

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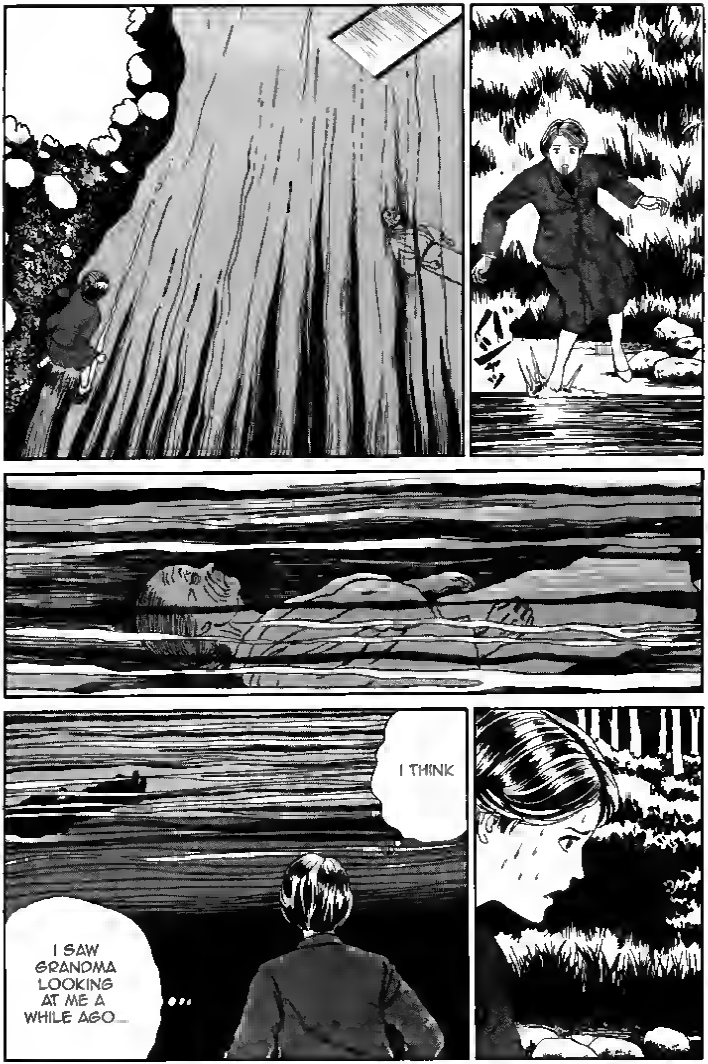
GRAND-MA!
BUT OSOBE IS ALREADY QUITE OLD...
GREAT... WE CAN FINALLY PREPARE A WEDDING FOR SHOUKICHI AND OSOBE!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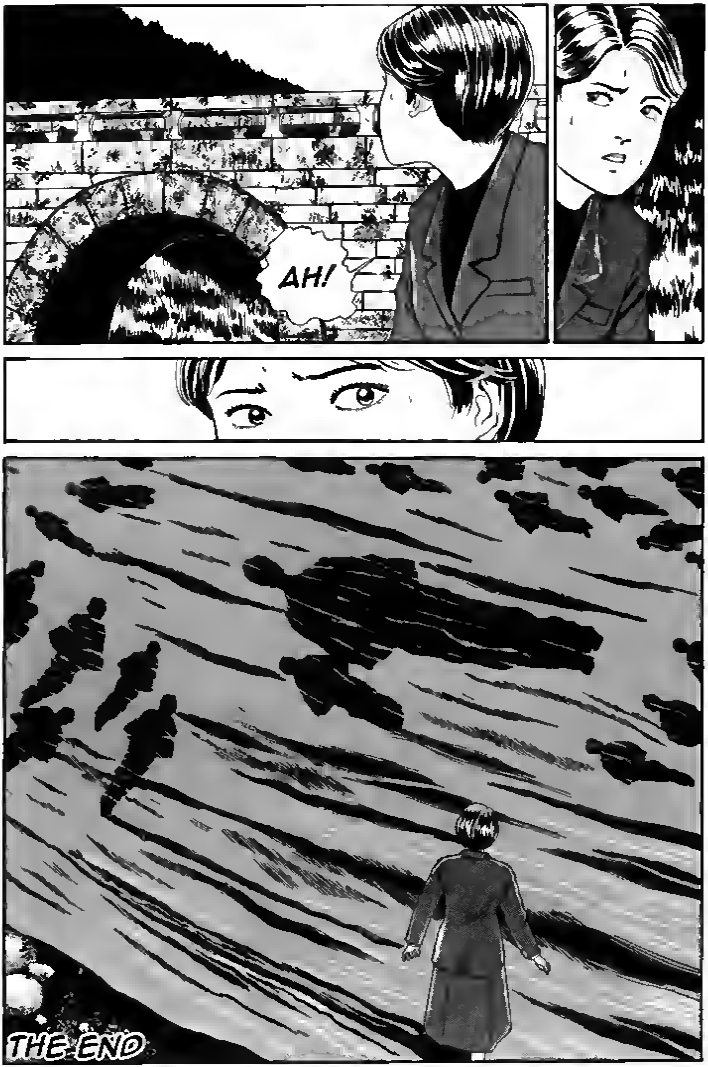
I THINK
I SAW GRANDMA LOOKING AT ME A WHILE AGO...


AH!
THE END